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SUBJECT: Somalia - International Contact Group Meeting

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¶1. On September 16, the International Contact Group on Somalia (ICG) met in Djibouti. Formerly co-chaired by the United States and Norway, the ICG is now chaired by United Nations Secretary General's Special Representative (SRSG) for Somalia Ahmedou Ould-Abdallah. This was the first ICG meeting with the SRSG at the helm. The format and content of the ICG was similar to previous meetings, yet more loosely organized. There was considerable wrangling over the communique, the final text of which follows in paragraph 3.

¶2. Transitional Federal Government (TFG) Prime Minister Nur Hassan Hussein and Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Information, Youth Affairs and Sports Ahmed Abdisalam Adan, along with Sharif Sheikh Ahmed, Chairman of the Alliance for the Re-liberation of Somalia (ARS) and Sharif Hassan Sheikh Aden, Chairman of ARS Central Committee, participated in the first session of the ICG meeting. (Comment: During the first round of discussions between the TFG and the ARS in May, these leaders would not meet face-to-face. During this ICG, all four leaders sat together, behind a single "Somalia" name plate on the table. End Comment). The ICG communique focuses on the implementation of Djibouti Agreement and collaboration between the TFG and ARS. Discussions also focused on the humanitarian situation and the growing problem of piracy.

¶3. Begin Text of ICG Communique:

The International Contact Group (ICG) on Somalia met for the first time under the chairmanship of the UN Special Representative for Somalia, Ahmedou Ould-Abdallah, on 16 September in Djibouti to discuss the situation in Somalia. It focused on ways to help implement the Djibouti Agreement signed between the Transitional Federal Government (TFG) and Alliance for the Re-Liberation of Somalia (ARS) on 19 August 2008. The ICG welcomed the joint participation of the TFG and ARS in its deliberations.

The ICG welcomes the signing of the Djibouti Agreement and the establishment of the High Level and Joint Security Committees. Members of the ICG urge the parties to the Djibouti Agreement to agree on concrete measures to implement the cessation of armed confrontation to allow the timely withdrawal of Ethiopian forces and the deployment of the stabilization force requested in the Djibouti Agreement. Members of the ICG stand ready to support politically and financially the implementation of agreements reached in the meetings of the Committees.

The ICG expresses its continued support for the political cooperation between the two parties including addressing issues of justice and reconciliation, impunity and the discussion on the political future of the two Parties along with the implementation of concrete measures enhancing confidence between them.

The ICG urges the Transitional Federal Institutions to fully

implement the Federal Charter requirements within the context of the Djibouti Agreement, including developing the constitution and the setting up of local administrations. The ICG renewed its commitment to support the rule of law and security as well as the institutions.

The ICG acknowledges the important work of AMISOM under difficult conditions inside Somalia, condemns the attacks on AMISOM soldiers and calls for more resources from the international community to allow it to deploy at full capacity.

The ICG condemns the continuing violence in Somalia especially against the most vulnerable members of society - women and children.

It condemns all attacks against humanitarian workers and calls on all parties to immediately cease all hostilities and allow free and unhindered access for humanitarian aid and calls for an increase in international support for humanitarian needs.

The ICG is determined to ameliorate the humanitarian catastrophe. ICG members urge the Parties to work through the Committees to urgently agree on plans and mechanisms to support the delivery of much needed humanitarian assistance in consultation with humanitarian partners.

The ICG welcomes the commitment to convene an international conference on reconstruction and development of Somalia as agreed upon in the Djibouti Agreement. The process is expected to take place in phases and the ICG has stated its willingness to immediately engage in the required preparatory work.

The ICG is deeply concerned by the growing number of incidents of piracy directly threatening international maritime activities and the delivery of humanitarian aid. It calls for the urgent implementation of measures to fight this scourge in line with

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Resolutions 1814 and 1816 and relevant international law principles.

The ICG welcomes the support provided by countries escorting World Food Programme shipments to Somalia and calls on other countries to ensure the continuity of this critical operation.

The ICG welcomes and is encouraged by the political cooperation between the TFG and ARS and calls on all Somalis, at home and abroad, to fully support the Djibouti Agreement. ICG members express their determination to support the consolidation of this cooperation. They further urge all parties to join the political process to quickly restore peace and stability to Somalia. They emphasize that no individuals or groups should be allowed to obstruct the peace process.

The ICG welcomes the recent agreement reached between the leaders of the Transitional Federal Institutions in Addis Ababa and calls for its implementation without delay.

The ICG expresses its thanks to the Government of Djibouti for hosting this conference and for all its support for the peace process in Somalia.

The next ICG meeting will be held at a date and location to be determined.

Present at Meeting:

UN, African Union, European Commission, European Union Council Secretariat, Presidency of European Union (France), IGAD, League of Arab States, Organization of Islamic Conference, World Bank, Canada, Djibouti, Egypt, Ethiopia, Italy, Kenya, Norway, Sweden, United Kingdom, United States

End Communique Text.

RANNEBERGER